

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. **(CANCELED)**

2. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** An article conveying apparatus for conveying articles between a plurality of article storage sections for storing therein the articles and a predetermined entry and exit port, the apparatus comprising:

an elongated running truck body that is movable in a longitudinal direction along a lower track laid along the article storage sections;

a platform provided with a transfer device for transferring articles;

an upper truck body guided along an upper track laid on a ceiling to face toward the lower track; and

raising and lowering poles for guiding and supporting said platform to be capable of freely ascending and descending,

and wherein

said elongated running truck body, said upper truck body, and said raising and lowering poles are each comprised of a one-piece rectangular pipe having four flat sides, [[such]]the rectangular pipes that formforming said running truck body and said upper truck body are located horizontally, each of the rectangular pipes that formforming said raising and lowering poles has a lower end part connected perpendicularly to a vertical side surface of the rectangular pipe that formsforming said horizontal running truck body located horizontally, each of the rectangular pipes that formforming said raising and lowering poles has an upper end part connected perpendicularly to a vertical side surface of the rectangular pipe that formsforming said horizontal upper truck body located horizontally, and the rectangular pipe that formsforming said upper truck body and the rectangular pipe that formsforming said running truck body are

located so as to connect at the respective one side surfaces thereof to the same one vertical side surface of the rectangular pipe that forms forming said raising and lowering pole, a central position of said raising and lowering pole in a lateral direction is a substantially central position of said article conveying apparatus, and this substantially central position coincides with a substantially central position of the work passage between both article storage sections.

3. (CANCELED)

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The article conveying apparatus according to claim 2, wherein a centerline of the rectangular pipe forming said raising and lowering poles is substantially a centerline of the article conveying apparatus when viewed along the direction of travel of said article conveying apparatus.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An article conveying apparatus for conveying articles between a plurality of article storage sections for storing therein the articles and a predetermined entry and exit port, the apparatus comprising:

an elongated running truck body that is movable horizontally in a longitudinal direction along a track laid along the article storage sections;

a platform provided with a transfer device for transferring articles; and

raising and lowering poles for guiding and supporting said platform to be capable of freely ascending and descending,

and wherein

said elongated running truck body and said raising and lowering poles are each comprised of a one-piece rectangular pipe having four flat sides, the rectangular pipe forming that forms said running truck body is located horizontally, the rectangular pipe forming that forms each of said raising and lowering poles has a lower end part connected perpendicularly to a vertical side surface of the rectangular pipe forming that forms said horizontal running truck body located horizontally, and said running truck body is supported by wheels guided along said track, the wheels being provided within the rectangular pipe forming that forms the horizontal running truck body and in alignment with respective positions where the lower end portions of

the rectangular pipe forming that form said raising and lowering poles are connected to the horizontal running truck body.

6. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** An article conveying apparatus for conveying articles between a plurality of article storage sections for storing therein the articles and a predetermined entry and exit port, the apparatus comprising:

an elongated running truck body having distal ends, said running truck body being horizontally oriented and movable horizontally in a longitudinal direction along a track laid along the article storage sections;

a platform provided with a transfer device for transferring articles;

a pair of raising and lowering poles for guiding and supporting said platform to be capable of freely ascending and descending;

a pair of raising and lowering ropes respectively having one ends connected to a front upper end and a rear upper end of said platform for suspending and supporting said platform and the other ends connected to the center of said platform; and

a driving wheel for feeding and winding said pair of raising and lowering ropes, wherein said elongated running truck body and said raising and lowering poles are each comprised of a one-piece rectangular pipe having four flat sides, the rectangular pipe forming that forms said running truck body is located horizontally, the rectangular pipe forming that forms each of said raising and lowering poles has a lower end part connected perpendicularly to a vertical side surface of the rectangular pipe forming that forms said horizontal running truck body located horizontally, and each of said raising and lowering ropes is guided from the upper part of said platform to the center of said running truck body via said driving wheel.

7. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 6, wherein a tension setting device is located in said platform to adjust a tension of each of said pair of raising and lowering ropes, the tension setting device including a pair of tension springs and a pair of chain bolts, wherein one of the tension springs and one of the chain bolts are provided respectively for one of said raising and lowering ropes.

8. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising: wheels supporting said running truck body; and

 a drive running device for driving the wheels supporting said running truck body, said drive running device located at a vertical side of the rectangular pipe forming said raising and lowering pole, the side being opposite from the vertical side surface of the rectangular pipe where said raising and lowering pole is connected to the vertical side surface of the rectangular pipe forming said running truck body.

9. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 2, wherein a raising and lowering drive device for raising and lowering said platform is located on a vertically oriented flat side surface at a latitudinal end of the rectangular pipe forming said running truck body.

10. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising a control panel for the article conveying apparatus having at least one swinging door provided to face one longitudinal end of the rectangular pipe forming said truck body, said control panel being located at an outside position of the rectangular pipe forming the raising and lowering poles and supported thereby.

11. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising a shock absorber located at a terminal end of the track, and a contact plate for contacting the shock absorber, said contact plate being located along one of said vertically oriented flat side surface of the rectangular pipe of said running truck body and set back inwardly from one of the longitudinal ends of the running truck body so as to prevent a machine length of the running truck body from increasing.